



Eco Awareness Society Newsletter

“The only force that can overcome an idea and a faith is another and better idea and faith, positively and fearlessly upheld.”
Dorothy Thompson

September 2010
No. 13



Bailey's Brook, Nova Scotia

Testimony Given to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission

Following is docket #1-AC-231, testimony of Allen Haas, filed August 24, 2010, to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission.

I have three wind turbines on my property and get \$4,000 for each one.

It's been 2 years now with the turbines and everyone in the community is irritable and short, they snap back. The best of friends for 35 years, but everyone just snaps. People are not really mad directly at the wind turbines or even know what they are mad about, they're just mad, aggressive.

The closest one to my house is 3,000 feet away – way too close. You don't get sleep at night because they roar like at an airport. I get shadow flicker in my house, but down in the village of Johnsbury where those are about another 1,500 feet away from the turbines...those blades are throwing shadows right over all the house roof tops in [the] entire village...that's really bad.

All of our tv's got knocked out too. I can only get local channels when the turbine is turned in a certain direction. 97% of the time, we got no reception. There is no mitigation either.

I go to the doctor and now I'm on a lot of different medications. I've been to the hospital a couple of times in the past two years with chest pains. And they just can't figure out what it is, but now we're all being diagnosed with wind turbine syndrome.

And I sure got it. It definitely causes depression. Memory loss is the worse issue. I see it so bad in myself and especially my parents who are older. But they are at the point

where they just don't care anymore...

My dad is a totally different person since these things went up. He stays in bed all day now. Even if he does get up to eat, he just goes back to bed. There is no will anymore. I ask the doctor – how are they doing this to us? He just says he doesn't know.

We Energies* called today and they are going to be spraying for weeds, so I asked if there were any more plans for windmills? They said, they don't know. I told em... “This area is completely destroyed, it would make more sense to just put a few up around here as opposed to destroying the rest of the state.”

I got turbines and the money doesn't pay off in the end. I've gotta spend more on cutting around those things and all them cables. It has destroyed my farmland.

I feel really bad for the folks who don't have contracts cause they're still all stuck. Even if a realtor wants to sell a place, the first question a buyer asks is if there are windmills in the area. They just hang up.

They should be paying everyone around who is affected, that way – everyone who wants to move could get out and move. So many want to move and leave, but they can't sell their property. The developers deny devaluation, but it's real... **the ones without contracts lost half the value of their property and can't move because they have no money, still trying to pay off their homes...**

It turned out to be a real shocker. This whole thing is not right, it should not be done in small communities...

If I could write out a check from the money they gave me and give it back, wake up tomorrow morning and all the turbines be gone, that'd be the best thing that ever happened to me.

I affirm that these comments are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Allen Haas, Malone, Wisconsin

*We Energies “Blue Sky/Green Field” wind project

~~~~

“The tiny, intermittent output of electricity and the negligible CO2 savings cannot possibly justify the huge sacrifice of that most finite resource - our unspoiled and irreplaceable countryside. It is our duty to protect our rural heritage for present and future generations from such gross and unnecessary industrialization.”

Angela Kelly, Country Guardian, U.K.

## No Spin: Windmills Fail

Following is an Editorial from the Orange County Register, August 26, 2010.

**California** – Is wind power a viable alternative to low-cost fossil fuels? **Consider this: relying on windmills to reduce greenhouse gas emissions not only is expensive and ironically harmful to the environment, it won't accomplish its main goal.**

“A slew of recent studies show that wind-generated energy likely won't result in any reduction in carbon emissions – or that they'll be so small as to be almost meaningless,” Robert Bryce, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, writes in a recent Wall Street Journal column.

Private-sector studies and the Department of Energy have found the intermittent nature of wind means utilities must either keep conventional power plants running to avoid outages, or “continually ramp up and down” conventional coal- or gas-fired generators, writes Mr. Bryce, author of “Power Hungry: The Myths of Green Energy and the Real Fuels of the Future.” **The inefficient “cycling” of generators made to run continuously creates more emissions than running constantly. Also, wind power largely displaces natural gas-fired generators rather than plants burning more carbon-intensive fuels,** says Mr. Bryce.

Nevertheless, wind power costs a lot. The U.S. Energy Industry Administration says tax subsidies for wind power are 200 times greater than for oil and gas, based on per-unit-of-energy produced.

California law mandates utilities must produce a third of their power from wind and other so-called renewable sources by 2020. Today 1.8 percent is wind-produced, and less than 1 percent nationwide.

The futility of replacing low-cost, efficient fossil fuels with windmills was learned in Scotland, where wind farms delivered half their anticipated power this year. Officials blamed calm weather. More than 40 German top business managers recently complained that mandated renewable energy, including wind power, “will cause significant extra costs in the future,” 8 billion euros this year alone.

In Nebraska, officials say wind power can't “sustain the state's energy needs” because, at best, windmills operate at 40 percent of maximum production level, compared with 90 percent for coal and 95 percent for nuclear power. **In Boston, consumers were assured wind power wouldn't increase their rates, but then discovered power from 130 Nantucket Sound wind turbines costs 21 cents per kilowatt hour compared with 9 cents from conventional sources.**

Don't forget the ecological price. Windmills' soaring heights obscure views and shred birds on massive scales... Wind turbines are so noisy that an Oregon wind-generation company offered residents \$5,000 each to sign a waiver

promising not to complain.

In Great Britain, where more than half of wind farms are built in places where there isn't enough wind, according to the Daily Mail, **the energy and climate change secretary estimates wind power will increase prices by one-third.** Then there's the additional, substantial costs to transmit electricity from remote wind farms to populated areas.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that America's 84 percent reliance on fossil fuels as of 2008 will be reduced to 78 percent by 2035 [all without industrial wind turbines.] **It makes little sense to mandate huge additional costs, to impose a less-reliable, annoying energy alternative that ultimately won't even achieve its principle goal of reducing greenhouse gases.**

(“No Spin: Windmills Fail”, Editorial, The Orange County Register, August 26, 2010)



Judith Peach standing in cleared turbine site #13, Digby Neck Wind Farm - See story next page

## Danish Energy Firm Gives Up on Land-Based Turbines

**Denmark** – State-owned energy firm Dong Energy has given up building more wind farms on Danish land, following protests from residents complaining about the noise the turbines make.

It had been Dong and the government's plan that 500 large turbines be built on land over the coming 10 years, as part of a large-scale national energy plan. **This plan has hit a serious stumbling block...due to many protests, and the firm has now given up building any more wind farms on land.**

Anders Eldrup, the CEO of Dong Energy, told TV2 News: “It is very difficult to get the public's acceptance if the turbines are built close to residential buildings, and therefore we are now looking at maritime options.”...

(Excerpt from “Dong Gives Up on Land-Based Turbines; Mass Protests Mean the Energy Firm Will Look Offshore,” The Copenhagen Post, September 1, 2010)

## The Digby Wind Power Project



Digby Neck Wind Power Project Site - May 1, 2010

**Nova Scotia** - We live in Waterford on Digby Neck, a very rural and remote part of the province. It takes us about three and a half hours to drive to Halifax where decisions about our future are made.

There are several villages on Digby Neck – now mostly involved in the lobster fishery, though once farming supplemented residents' living. For about a century, the area has also attracted summer residents, especially to the village of Sandy Cove. Some local fishermen now supplement their income with whale watching businesses.

The peninsula of Digby Neck and the two islands beyond (Long and Brier) are also important to many bird species as part of their fall migration path. Brier Island is an internationally recognized Important Bird Area (IBA).

Construction began for Nova Scotia Power's "Digby Wind Power Project" this past April, on the top of the North Mountain among the villages of Rossway, Gulliver's Cove and Waterford on Digby Neck.

Now, in early September, the project's twenty 118.5 metre tall (400-foot) General Electric 1.5 megawatt turbines are in place and can be seen for miles around.

Digby Neck is only about 3500 metres wide at the wind farm site. The "field" of turbines in the "wind farm" takes up about a third of this width, and is about two and a half kilometres long. The construction site looked more like the twinning of Highway 101 than the top of a mountain.

In addition, a new transmission line 20 kilometres long is being built to connect the wind project with the grid at Digby.

We feel that industrial scale development is incompatible with this area.

Many people in Nova Scotia and both provincial and federal governments agreed when the Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal was turned down a little further down the Neck in 2007.

Unfortunately, few people realize how industrial, "green energy" development really is. There was little opposition to the wind farm that is now almost complete on Digby Neck. After having fought the project for two years, we have now spent the summer watching and hearing the construction.

The closest turbine is 1200 metres from our home. And though we can't see any turbines from the house, NSPI's latest sound study (available on NSPI's website) estimates worst-case sound levels outside our home at 42 dB(A). There is no indication in the study how likely their estimate is to be correct, nor how often this level is likely to occur.

**We are among those who have come to the area - or stayed - for the quality of life in a quiet, remote rural area.** We have a small, energy efficient house on 64 acres. Over the years, we have planted perennials, shrubs and trees; improved the garden soil so we can now raise most of our own vegetables, and thinned the clearcut re-growth for firewood. We have pastured hens for our eggs and had plans for a family cow and maybe oxen to work further back in the woods. Our view has been sea, sky, and forest. All this has now changed.

**We do not want to live under twenty wind turbines. We don't want to have to tangle with NSPI every time noise levels are excessive. We don't want to hear even lower levels of noise from the machines. We don't want to see them at every turn in the road or trail, or from the beach. We don't want to live in a company town with local residents obsequious to company officials, hoping for meager jobs and handouts.**

So, last month we put our house on the market. We hope to sell and move away. Maybe to a place where peaceful, responsible, hardworking rural residents who pay their bills – and their taxes – are listened to and appreciated by decision-makers. Or at least start over somewhere else and hope this insane wind farm fad will soon pass.

Nora & Judith Peach  
Waterford, Digby Neck, Nova Scotia



Digby Neck Wind Power Project Site - August 29, 2010

## Industry-Funded Noise Standard “Scientific Nonsense”

**New Zealand** – Noise standards paving the way for billion-dollar wind-farm developments across the country are biased and should be ripped up, academics say.

Critics have panned the latest New Zealand standard on wind-farm noise... written by a Standards New Zealand committee, dominated by industry members... “The standard is industry-funded and I’m afraid it comes down to who pays the piper calls the tune,” one academic said...

Massey University acoustics professor and committee member Philip Dickinson said the standard, and those elsewhere in the world, appeared to be based on “scientific nonsense”.

**“One can only come to the conclusion that the concept is mainly a business promotion and public relations exercise which has been devised to appear to be taking into consideration the health and welfare of local residents but is designed to get the most out of the investment for the cheapest outlay, without causing the community to take serious legal action against the developer”...he said.**

Dickinson voted against the new standard. In previously confidential voting papers released under the Official Information Act, he slammed it as “totally unacceptable” and said it contained “arrogant and misinformed” and “totally false” information...

AUT University public health senior lecturer Daniel Shepherd wants Standards New Zealand to start again and develop two wind-farm noise codes – one for turbine noise and the other for the potential health effects from the noise.

Health expertise had clearly been under-represented on the committee in favour of acoustics and industry members and consultants, he said.

(Excerpt from “Revisit Noise Standards – Academics”,  
Paul Gorman, The Press, August 18, 2010)

## Glen Dhu Greenhouse Gas Reductions Unsupported

*Following is an Addendum to Bruce Wark’s article “Blow Job”, which appeared in The Coast, August 5, 2010*

**Nova Scotia** - Bruce Wark adds: It is interesting what Shear Wind has to say about the Glen Dhu project resulting in GHG emissions reductions. At Shear Wind’s open house that I attended last January in Antigonish County, the com-

pany had a display board listing “Local Benefits of the Glen Dhu Wind Farm”. The final point on the board read: “Environmentally Sustainable project that plays a significant part in Nova Scotia’s goal to reduce greenhouse gas.” The company also made the following statement in a newsletter it circulated to households in Baileys Brook in the fall of 2008: “At the local level, by hosting a wind farm, the local communities around the proposed Shear Wind farm will be making their own essential contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.”

But when the Eco Awareness Society asked Shear Wind to explain specifically how its project would reduce GHG emissions in Nova Scotia and to quantify the reductions that could be reasonably expected, the company gave this written response in its December 2009--January 2010 newsletter: “Wind energy is recognized as a part of Nova Scotia government’s goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). This is cited in both the Nova Scotia 2009 Energy Strategy and the ‘interim report to stakeholders’ (Dec, 2009) led by David Wheeler. Shear Wind is proud to be a significant contributor to Nova Scotia’s Wind energy plan. Metrics are available from other studies.”

In one of the documents it submitted to the environmental assessment process, the company said that since Nova Scotia Power has sole discretion over the use of wind power on the grid, GHG emissions reductions were outside the scope of Shear Wind’s responsibility. In other words, the company seems happy to claim that the Glen Dhu project will contribute significantly to GHG emissions reductions, but it has consistently refused to support that statement with any facts or projections.

(“Blow Job” Addendum, Bruce Wark, The Coast,  
Volume 18, Number 10, August 5- 11, 2010)

~~~

“Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.”

Helen Keller

~~~

EAS newsletter is published monthly by the Eco Awareness Society. All work is done on a volunteer basis. Membership is \$10. yearly.

If you would like to become a member or for more information on EAS, please go to our website at: [www.ecoawarenesssociety.ca](http://www.ecoawarenesssociety.ca)

Or contact us at 902-926-2297 or [info@ecoawarenesssociety.ca](mailto:info@ecoawarenesssociety.ca)

The Eco Awareness Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to uphold these principles: that “a subset of society should not be forced to bear the cost of a benefit for the larger society”, that a landowner’s right to full use and enjoyment of their property be upheld and not taken or hindered for public or private use or development, without just compensation, and that any policy or development with regard to the environment and landscape of Nova Scotia be shown to be effective and based on the principals of environmental sustainability and stewardship of our precious resources.\*

\*Based on the *Canadian Charter of Rights* and the *Fifth Amendment, U.S. Constitution*